

ANGLOPHONE SOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT (ASD-S)
DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting – November 8, 2017

The District Education Council (DEC) for Anglophone South School District (ASD-S) met on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at the Saint John Education Centre, 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John. The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Council Members:

Rob Fowler, Chair; Wayne Spires, Bernie Regenbogen, Dan O'Connor, Linda Sherbo, Gerry Mabey, Rob Alexander, Heather Gillis, Larry Boudreau, Richard Malone

Regrets: Roger Nesbitt; Justin Tinker

ASD-S Staff:

Zoë Watson, Superintendent; Paul Smith, Director of Schools, Hampton Education Centre; Derek O'Brien, Director of Schools, St. Stephen Education Centre; Debbie Thomas, Director of Schools, Saint John Education Centre; Peter Smith, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; John MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration; Gary Hall, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary.

1. Call to Order/Welcome/Regrets

Mr. Fowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Mr. Fowler advised that Mr. Tinker had offered to attend via conference call while away on vacation. Mr. Fowler noted that since there were no major votes to be taken, he suggested that Mr. Tinker enjoy the time with his family. Mr. Nesbitt was also out of town.

2. Approvals

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fowler asked that if there were no questions or concerns with the Agenda, that a motion be put forward to approve. Ms. Sherbo asked that Council remove item 6.2 (Governance Policies 5, 6 & 7 - refer to Policy Review Committee) and replace it with an update from the Policy Review Committee. There being no further questions or concerns, the Chair called for a motion to approve as amended. Ms. Sherbo moved that the amended Agenda be approved. Ms. Gillis seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.2 Approval of Minutes

Mr. Fowler referred to the Minutes of the October 11, 2017 meeting and advised that if there were no concerns or questions regarding the Minutes, that a motion be put forward to approve.

Ms. Sherbo advised with regard to item 6.1, she wanted to note that she did not receive Mr. Fowler's reply to her request for time on the in camera session at last month's meeting. Mr. Fowler explained that he had composed his email response immediately following her request; however, unfortunately due to a computer problem, the email was never sent.

Ms. Sherbo also advised that Stacey Brown, DEC Manager, should be included as a member on the Policy Review Committee.

There being no further questions or concerns Mr. Spires moved that the Minutes be approved with the amendments noted. Ms. Sherbo seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2.3 Public Comment

None

3. Member's Notebook

Mr. O'Connor mentioned the "VanGo" Art Show that was held at St. Martins School during the month of October. Students were very interested in the works of NB artists which included displays, carvings and paintings. He also noted that Simonds High School students raised funds again this year to "pay it forward" to the community and stood at the Tim Hortons to offer a free coffee to the members of the public.

Ms. Sherbo advised that 3 of the PSSCs in her subdistrict have doubled their membership this year. She attended the My/Mon NB 150 event at Harbour Station on Thursday October 26, 2017 and was very impressed with the excellent booths and displays. The event was designed to get students thinking critically about big issues in New Brunswick and how they can get involved in community problem-solving. She noted the "GREEN" project by St. Stephen High School on testing water was fabulous. She requested that we add BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) as an agenda topic for a future meeting. Ms. Sherbo asked if there had been any feedback from the Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) presentation at the last meeting – did they get an uptake in volunteers? Mrs. Watson advised that Erica Lane, Community Engagement Coordinator will be asking for BBBS brochures and provide them to PSSCs in an effort to help get the word out about the need for more volunteers. Mrs. Watson suggested we could follow up with BBBS in a few months for feedback.

With regard to a question about the possibility of DEC funding joint PSSC events, Mr. Fowler advised that if the PSSC groups work together, they can share their budgets in

order to cover expenses; however, they can always ask. Mrs. Watson reminded Council that “gift cards” are not to be given as gifts to presenters.

Ms. Gillis advised Council that Bayview Elementary students would be at the Garden Street Irving to participate in a “Fuel our Schools” initiative on Thursday, November 9 between 4 pm and 8 pm. During that time, a portion of gas sales that are pumped from their “special pump” will go to the school. She also noted that Saint John High School was meeting with other city high schools to get started organizing another “It Takes A Village” event.

Mr. Spires commented on the recent NB Student Leadership event in Fredericton. He was impressed with the students who spoke from their heart. It was amazing how students find time and energy to help other students in their building, working part time, get an education and also play a leadership role in their schools.

Mr. Mabey and Ms. Gillis noted that they have been invited to attend Remembrance Day ceremonies at their schools.

Ms. Sherbo thanked Mr. O’Connor for his analysis/comparison of the Student Fees information that had been provided by staff and felt it was very helpful.

4. Business Arising from Minutes

4.1 PSSC Orientation Sessions Update

Mr. Fowler advised that the turnout this year was mediocre. Feedback forms completed after the event have been summarized and posted on the portal. He noted that it is difficult to find interesting ways to impart the information PSSCs need to get as it is pretty dry material.

Mrs. Watson noted that Council has been using the same format for the last few years. She suggested that this might be a good time to strike a working group of DEC members to take it on for next year and change it up. Ms. Sherbo and Mr. Mabey agreed to work on this with help from Ms. Gillis and Mr. Hall. Mrs. Watson encouraged the group to develop their plans early in order to be ready for the fall.

5. Presentation

5.1 New Provincial K-8 Report Card

Mrs. Watson introduced Christine Dumont to Council and advised that Ms. Dumont came to District Office last January from her role as VP at Barnhill School. She has spent her time preparing schools last year and this for the new provincial changes to K-8 report cards. She has attended professional learning days, staff meetings and core leadership team meetings

all with the goal of getting schools ready to use the new report card. The new report cards will be going out the week of November 20th.

Ms. Dumont identified this endeavor as a huge learning shift for teachers but was confident it is the way we should be going. She noted that it has been a team effort involving the Department of Education and Early Childhood, the District and the NBTA.

The new report card will reflect and support the changes in the classroom assessment practices and provide parents with a report card that details how their children are performing and progressing. It offers an improved communication tool that provides much more information than just a mark. Teachers will be using their professional judgement to ensure students understand where they are with their learning, where they need to go next and how they are going to get there. These report cards will now identify strengths, weaknesses and achievements (evidence based).

Ms. Dumont shared making a “key lime pie” example to show how student achievement levels might be assessed. She also reviewed the new provincial academic achievement expectations/ratings of 1 (working below) through 4+ (surpasses).

Numerous questions were raised by Council including whether the report cards would be the same for students on PLP; were they the same as in other districts; what students would be evaluated on in certain courses; and how specific criteria would be measured in a course (for example, how do you measure “value” in Physical Education). Ms. Dumont provided information to address all comments.

Question was asked about information being communicated to parents on the upcoming changes. Mr. Hall, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, suggested it will be a culture change for parents. Brochures were sent home at the end of the last school year and again at the beginning of this school year. Ms. Dumont has held parent sessions at schools, provided information to PSSCs, Administration and for websites. He noted that we were able to use a lot of information provided by ASD-W as they introduced this ahead of us.

Ms. Sherbo asked about the need for consistency in descriptions/information on all materials to ensure everyone is speaking the same language. For example, some used the Key Lime Pie example to explain achievement levels while others used a bike. Ms. Dumont advised that some examples must be different due to grade levels and age appropriateness.

Question was raised whether Ms. Dumont would be working with teachers following the introduction of the new report card and adapting it as required. Mrs. Watson advised that this is a provincial report card and the District would not be able to make changes to it. She noted that other districts have introduced this before us and changes have been made along the way as required. She noted that Mr. Hall funnels any feedback or comments.

Mr. Spires thanked Ms. Dumont for her presentation and advised that he had seen the parent guide and found it very clear and well written. He reminded Council members that

we are here to focus on policy governance and not get into operational matters which are the responsibility of the Superintendent.

Mr. Fowler advised that this is a provincial initiative and we were invited at the beginning to provide feedback. Now that it is this far down the road, we no longer provide feedback as it is now Operations.

Mr. Boudreau commented that our job is to provide communication to parents and PowerSchool is a great tool to use but the parent portal/public is not yet available to all schools in the District. PSSCs are asking for it.

6. New Business

6.1 Retreat Follow Up: Vision, Mission & ENDS Policies

Mrs. Watson reviewed the package of information that was posted on the portal for Council's review which outlined the stages that had been undertaken to get to the point where we are now ready to review draft broad goal statements (ENDS policies) for the remainder of this Council's term.

Mrs. Watson displayed for Council the current Mission Statement plaque which is located in all schools and offices across the District. She noted that the wording is still very consistent with the key words and phrases that Council landed on during the retreat. She asked if Council would be in agreement that we keep the current Mission Statement as is. Council members were in agreement that it remain as is going forward.

Mrs. Watson advised that the Management Team worked with the notes from the September retreat and developed 5 draft goal statements for review. Next step will be to develop actions/strategies to follow the goal statements. She noted that the draft goals all have links and align with the 10 Year Education Plan. She then reviewed the 5 draft goal statements and asked Council for their feedback.

Mr. Fowler suggested that we not get into trying to hash out the exact wording for each statement but if anyone had any specific points they wanted to raise to please send their feedback to Mrs. Watson.

Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Malone and Mr. Spires all commented that they felt the statements covered all they needed to and were happy with them. They thanked staff for the work that went into developing these goals.

Mrs. Watson said that staff felt very good about Council's goals and asked for a motion to move forward to develop strategies and action items under each of the five statements.

Mr. Fowler suggested that the LGBTQ goal would require a separate policy on its own and should not be lumped in with bullying, etc. Mrs. Sherbo felt that Mental Wellness/Fitness/Mental Health First Aid would also require its own policy.

Ms. Gillis moved that the now 7 broad goal statements be approved as presented. Mrs. Sherbo seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Mrs. Watson thanked Council and advised that this work would now move beyond the Management Team and that they would work with staff to develop the strategies/action items. She advised that it will take a significant amount of time to finalize the new District Improvement Plan, estimating it would be at least a couple of months.

6.2 Governance Policies 5, 6 & 7

As per the amended Agenda, this item was referred to the Policy Review Committee and replaced with a Policy Review Committee Update.

Question was raised about whether or not the Policy Review Committee was to be an ad-hoc committee, or a standing committee. Discussion arose and it was determined by show of hands that it was to be an ad-hoc committee.

Ms. Sherbo questioned the Terms of Reference for the committee. Mr. Fowler advised that they would come from Council as a whole. The scope would be all except the ENDS policies. Mrs. Sherbo advised that in case Council members wanted to send comments/suggestions on the policies being reviewed, there should be a schedule of what will be looked at and a date by when feedback would be required.

6.3 Capital Improvement Projects 2018-19

Mr. MacDonald, Director of Finance & Administration reviewed one change to the Capital Improvement Projects list. He explained that the Department of Education recommended moving Bayside Middle School to near the top of the list due to flooding issues at the school over the last few years. He outlined the scope of work that would be covered. All projects on the list simply moved down one in order to make room for Bayside at the number two position. He advised that a motion of approval would be required. Mr. O'Connor moved that Bayside Middle School be moved to the number two position on the list with all other projects bumped down one. Mr. Malone seconded the motion. Motion carried.

7. Information Items

7.1 Superintendent's Report and Update

Mrs. Watson advised that her report was posted on the portal along with the meeting materials for tonight's session and will be attached to, and form part of these Minutes.

She requested a moment of silence in memory of Darrel Harvey, a long serving EA from Belleisle Regional High School and for Mary Beth Aasen, a resource teacher at Rothesay Elementary School. Both staff members passed away in October.

She then asked if there were any questions on her report. Mrs. Sherbo asked about "Cashless Schools". Mrs. Watson explained that this software pilot would allow parents to pay on line and eliminate the need for school staff to collect and count cash. She noted that there were 12-15 schools interested in the first wave.

She asked if her report covered the type of information that Council was looking for and whether or not it was too much information. Council was very happy with this format.

Mrs. Watson followed up on a comment earlier about the Parent Portal on Power School. She advised that prior to this, six high schools used EdLine and paid for it. The six high schools using that platform were the first to move to Power School's Parent Portal and a couple of others have since followed; however, what is slowing us down is the person power to make this happen. The District only has one Power School Lead and one Lead for Report Card implementation. Mr. Boudreau moved that Council write a letter to the Minister requesting additional resources to help schools within the District move ahead with Power School's Parent Portal. Seconded by Mr. Spires. Motion carried.

7.2 Chair's Report and Update

Mr. Fowler advised that next weekend would be the Minister's Forum and Minister's Excellence in Education Awards ceremony in Fredericton. He noted that two of our three winners will be in attendance; one will be away. He explained that this is a highlight of the year for him. Mr. Nesbitt, Vice Chair, will also be taking part at the ceremony on Saturday night.

Mr. Fowler advised that he will be meeting with the new NBTA President, George Daley.

Mr. Fowler advised Council that he would be asking each member to complete a Meeting Evaluation form following each Council session moving forward. This would allow him to address any issues/concerns and help to keep meetings on track and on time. Council members were asked to hand them in to Mr. Fowler at the end of each meeting and are free to sign it or not.

Mr. Fowler spoke about a breakdown in decorum during previous meetings and outlined steps that he will be implementing to address this challenge:

- A Speaker's List will be instituted – this will allow each Council member one question and only one follow up
- Mr. Fowler will watch for Council members' signal that they have something to contribute

- He reminded Council that members can certainly attack an idea; however, not the person
- He reviewed the protocol if a Council member has a concern. They can report it to either himself, or the Vice Chair as appropriate and suggested Council refer to the Code of Conduct for the correct process to follow.

7.3 Correspondence

None; all correspondence posted on the portal for Council's information.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Fowler thanked all who attended this evening's Council meeting and advised that the next meeting will be held at 490 Woodward Avenue, Saint John on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Fowler, Chair

Clare Murphy, Recording Secretary